

Meeting Minutes
WEST CHARLOTTE STORMWATER UTILITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE
March 5, 2014 – Special Meeting
10:00 a.m. – Building Construction Services Conference Room

Attendees: Lawrence Harrod, Henry Killion, and Stanley Plizga

Absent: Laren Armstrong (excused), Glynn Perkins (excused), and Scott Schermerhorn (unexcused)

County: Karen Bliss, Judith Nothdurft, Dan Quick, Joanne Vernon, and Sandy Wright

Guests: Sign-in sheet attached

The meeting was called to order at 10:00 a.m. with a roll call that determined a quorum was present.

The purpose of this meeting is to discuss the project to remove water lettuce from the Rotonda River.

- The Purchasing Department received two bids for this project. A third bid was submitted by Florida Aquatics Inc.; however it was not considered because it was not submitted properly. The Committee is looking for help from the County due to the cost of the lowest bid being \$35,000 and so much higher than the estimate for \$8000 that was provided by Florida Aquatics Inc. There was discussion regarding circumventing the County's process in an effort to save \$25,000. Ms. Vernon stated that the MSBU went through the County. The County is obligated by State law for the Purchasing Department to follow through with awarding the lowest bidder the project or face the possibility of a law suit. The Committee inquired about the Purchasing process that states an estimate can be acquired by placing 3 phone calls. Ms. Vernon explained that this process is used for tangible items such as a lawn mower; not services being rendered in a contract. There was discussion regarding the Committee doing this on their own in the future without going through the County; the area to be done is on State Property which would prevent the Committee from doing the project on their own. The sequence of events was reviewed and discussed. The Committee is not happy with being obligated to spend an additional \$25,000. The County's is modifying their permit for this area to allow the use of chemicals which would allow future work to be done by County staff. Ms. Vernon stated that a response must be received by the Purchasing Department by March 13, 2014. She highly recommended the Committee accept the bid due to inadequate time to explore other options. The County will work with the State to define who is responsible for maintaining this area. The Committee agreed the water lettuce must be removed and there is no other alternative. The Committee asked for the County's blessing to spend the additional money. Mr. Killion made a motion to move forward with the low bid contractor to remove the water lettuce in the Rotonda River; the motion was seconded by Mr. Plizga and passed unanimously. There was further discussion where it was stated that the Rotonda side is complete and they don't want this spreading back to their side. Ms. Vernon suggested a maintenance plan that would prevent the lettuce from getting this bad in the future; this would keep the cost down. Projects under \$5000 can be done with a purchase order instead of being put out to bid. Ms. Vernon stated again that the County will work with the State to define responsibility and will continue with the modification of their permit to allow them to apply chemicals in this area.
- The Committee stated they are very pleased with the job that was done by Florida Aquatics Inc. on the Rotonda side and requested they take the necessary steps to prevent their bids from being rejected in the future.
- There was additional discussion regarding the Purchasing process and the length of time it has taken to get this far. Mr. Lyons stated that the tax payers will now have to pay \$25,000 more than they need to and said that he feels County staff should have to do due diligence to examine why there is such a large discrepancy between an estimate and a low bid. It was stated that the County has many projects being worked at the same time.

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- There was discussion regarding the Coral Creek Restoration Project. There is a concern over the water not draining due to the height of the new dam. Ms. Vernon will re-look at it. The Committee agreed to table this item until the next regular meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:40 a.m.

Submitted by:

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Sandy Wright".

Sandy Wright

Public Works Department

